The Spirituality Wheel©

A Spiritual Type Selector

by Corinne D. Ware, D. Min.

The purpose of this exercise is to DRAW A PICTURE of your personal style of spirituality.

Read through the following statements, circling the number corresponding to the statement in each category that best describes your personal belief or preference. You may select as many statements as you wish; you need not only choose one. Match the chosen statement numbers with the quadrant numbers in the circle on the last page. Draw a spoke in the appropriate quadrant for each statement selected. The result is a portrait of your personal spiritual type.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

1. A carefully planned and orderly worship service is a glory to God.
2. A deeply moving and spontaneous service is a glory to God.
3. Simplicity and some silence are important elements needed for worship.
4. It is not a service, but ordering ourselves to God's service that is important.

TIME

1. It is important to stick to announced beginning and ending times of worship services.
2. It is important to extend the service time if one feels led to do so.
3. All time is God's time. A sense of timelessness is important.
4. Gather whenever and as long as you need to in order to accomplish the task.

PRAYER

1. Words express poetic praise; I ask for knowledge and guidance.
2. Let words and feelings evoke God's presence in this moment.
3. Empty the mind of distractions and simply BE in the presence of the Holy.
4. My life and my work are my prayer.

MUSIC

1. Music and lyrics express praise to God and belief about God.
2. Singing warms and unites us and expresses the soul's deepest worship.
3. Music brings the soul to quietness and union with God.
4. Singing can mobilize and inspire to greater effort and dedication.

PREACHING

1. The Word of God, rightly proclaimed, is the centerpiece of worship.
2. The gospel movingly preached is the power of God to change lives.
3. Proclamation is heard when the Spirit of God speaks to the inward heart.
4. What we do is our "preaching" and speaks louder than anything we say.

EMPHASIS

1. It is important that I fulfill my vocation (calling) in the world.
2. It is important that I learn to walk in holiness with the Lord.
3. It is important that I be one with the Creator.
4. It is important that I obey God's will completely

SUPPORT OF CAUSES

(If necessary, circle the words that apply and select categories with the most circles.)

1. It is important to support seminaries, publishing houses, scholarship, and preaching.
2. It is important to support evangelism, missions, spreading the word on television and radio.
3. It is important to support places of retreat, spiritual direction, liturgical reform.
4. It is important to support political action to establish justice in society and its institutions.

CRITICISM

1. Sometimes I may be too intellectual, dogmatic, and "dry."
2. Sometimes I may be too emotional, dogmatic, anti-intellectual.
3. Sometimes I may escape from the world and not be sufficiently realistic.
4. Sometimes I may have tunnel vision and be too moralistic.

DOMINATING THEMES

(If necessary, circle the words that apply and select categories with the most circles.)

1. Discernment, discipline, knowledge, order, grace, justification.
2. Love, conversion, witness, spontaneity, sanctification.
3. Poverty, humility, wisdom, letting go, transcendence.
4. Simplicity, purity of heart, action, temperance, obedience, martyrdom.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

(What I believe should be necessary)

1. Assent to doctrine; baptism; endorsement by group.
2. A personal inward experience of God; baptism; public declaration.
3. All who face Godward.
4. Solidarity with humankind is membership in God's kingdom.

RITUAL AND LITURGY
1. Ritual and liturgy evoke memory and presence, teaching traditional truths.
2. Liturgy and ritual ceremonies are not of great importance.
3. Ritual and liturgy are ways in which God becomes present to us.
4. Ritual and liturgy are one way we make statements about inner conviction.

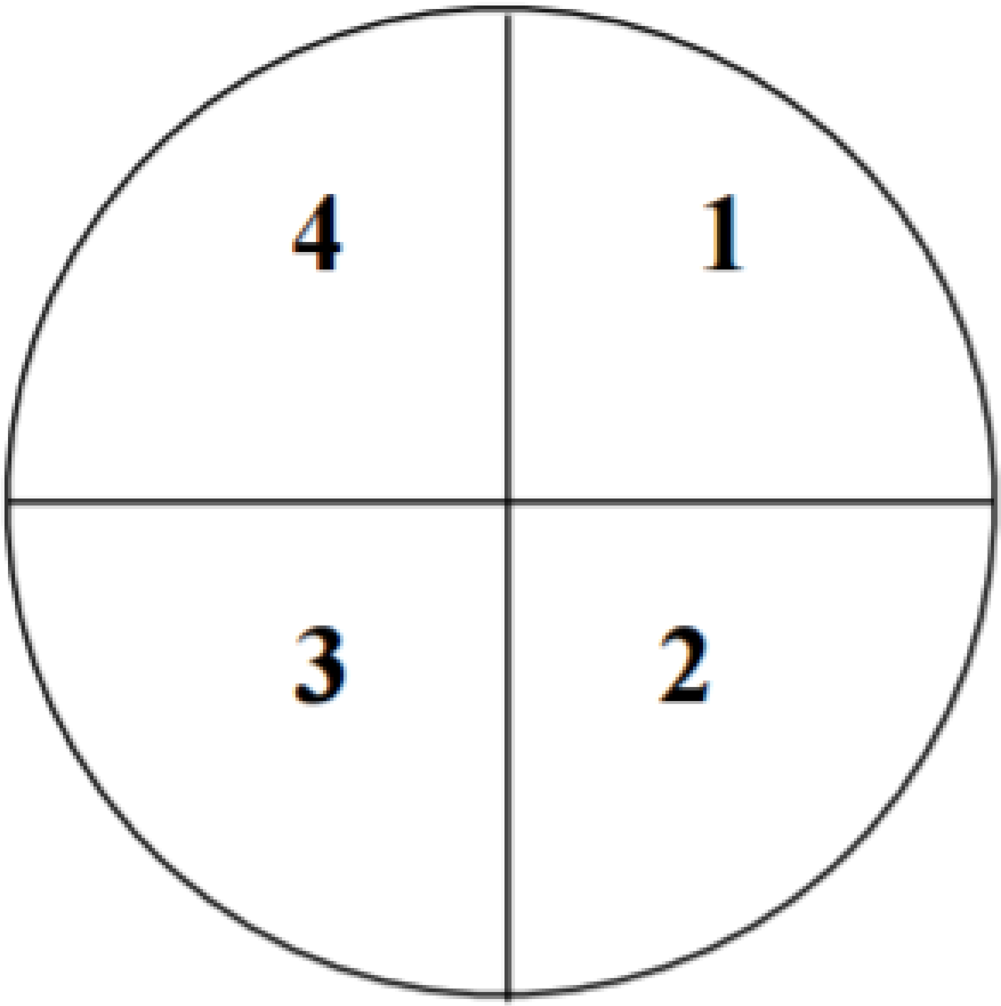
CONCEPT OF GOD
1. God is revealed in scripture, sacrament, and in Jesus Christ and his cross.
2. I can feel that God is real and that Christ lives in my heart.
3. God is mystery and can be grasped for but not completely known.
4. We participate in the mystery of God when we become co-creators with God in the world.

Added questions

When explaining to people about my faith I would use as my primary resource:
1. The Commentary or 27 Fundamental Beliefs
2. My own experience of what Jesus and the Church have meant to me
3. Prayer and the experience of the holy
4. The corporal and spiritual works of mercy

When I pray I mostly seek:
1. Insights, guidance or answers
2. A closer walk with the Lord
3. An inner consciousness of God
4. A deeper commitment to God's reign on earth

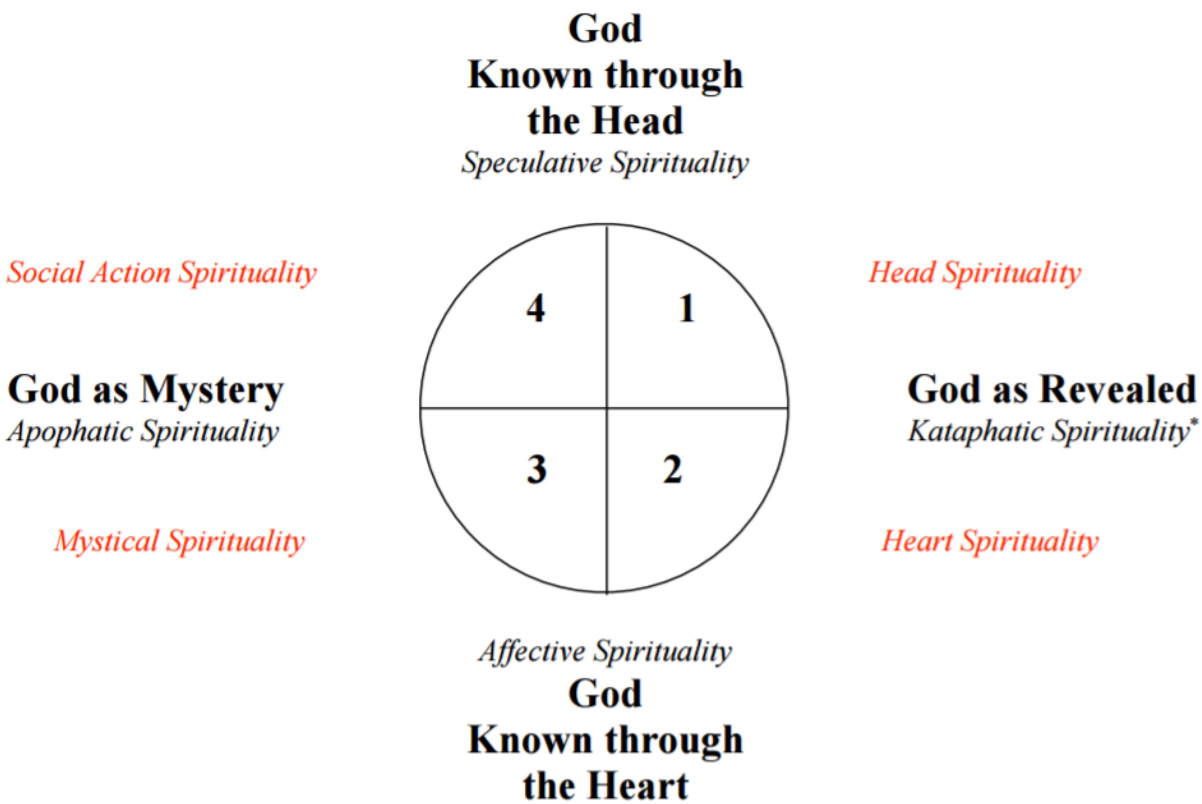
Which description of a spiritual pathway best describes your experience?
(If necessary, circle the words that apply and select categories with the most circles.)
1. Theological renewal, confidence in being right, knowledge, insights, connections, attention, revelation.
2. Personal renewal, holiness in everyday life, born again, emotion, relationships, devotion, conversion. 3. The inner life, contemplation, stillness, asceticism (spiritual disciplines), union, mystery, awareness.
4. Prophetic witness, the reign of God, social concern, justice, peace, relevance, love in action.


4
1
3
2

The Spirituality Wheel©

A Spiritual Type Selector

by Corinne D. Ware, D. Min.



* Apophatic, or negative spirituality stresses interiority, imageless-ness and wordlessness. Kataphatic, or positive spirituality is image-driven and uses analogies to speak of God

Discuss 4 Types

Type 1 (Head Spirituality) - Danger is Rationalism

- This is an intellectual "thinking" spirituality that believes strongly in the knowability of Gods (as based on revelation)
- It favours the concrete (what it can see, touch and imagine)
- It tends to mistrust mystery and minimize emotions
- This style produces theological reflection and precision in thinking and communication People attracted to this form of spirituality tend to be rational and logical, valuing precision in their thinking and speech
- Content is of primary importance to these people
    - Faith is belief in certain things
- Congruence of thought, and thought and action, are important
- Tend to look to the sermon and scriptures for spiritual guidance
- Tend to be people of the Word and people of words
- Prayer tends to be language or word-based
- Spiritual danger is rationalism – an over intellectualization of one's spiritual life with a consequent loss of feeling and inner conviction
- Good example would be John Calvin
    - Father of Reformed and Presbyterian theology
    - Initially commenced training for the priesthood but came into contact with Protestants whom he felt had a clearer grasp of the Biblical message
    - At age 27 wrote The Institutes of Christian Religion (which remains one of the great theological treatises of the last four centuries)
    - Over next 25 years wrote commentaries on all NT books and 23 OT books, all of which were distributed and read throughout Europe, changing the face of the church there, and in the New World
    - A man of the Word who encouraged a religion of the head that emphasized theological precision and conviction

Type 3 (Mystical Spirituality) – Danger is Reclusivity

- This is a mystical spirituality that emphasizes the mystery of faith and the ultimate un-knowability of God
- Emphasizes that our thoughts about God are always pale and imperfect reflections of his being as he is "wholly other", unnameable, beyond our comprehension and containment
- Emphasizes hearing from God over speaking to him
- Goal of spirituality is understood as union with God

- People attracted to this type of spirituality are often contemplative and intuitive, tending to be focused on an inner world that is as real to them as the external one 6
- Renewal of the inner life is at the core of their understanding of spirituality
- Emphasize the process of spirituality (favouring metaphor of the journey)
- Spiritual danger is reclusivity – an exaggerated retreat from reality and from interaction with the world, associated with passivity
- Good example of Thomas Merton
    - Twentieth century adult convert to Christianity from a non-religious background, quickly entering training for the priesthood and subsequently entering the Cistercian monastic order
    - Spend the rest of his life in contemplative prayer and writing books and talking with others about such life of prayer as mystical union with God

Type 2 (Heart Spirituality) – Danger is Emotionalism

- Here God is still understood to be knowable, but more through the heart than the head
- If God is love, assumption is that he must be known through love, not simply known through ideas
- Spirituality is not, therefore, a head trip – it's all heart
- Theology still important and Scriptures seen to be the source of our knowing of God
- But our response to knowing God is expected to involve heart, not just head
- Result is a more charismatic spirituality whose aim is to achieve holiness of life
- Personal holiness is the goal of spirituality
- Prayer is made with words but words may be used less formally and prayer is often extemporaneous, spontaneous and even exuberant
- Of primary importance is experience
- Spiritual danger is excessive emotionalism and the belief that emotion is the test of the validity of a person's spiritual experience
- Another danger is an exclusive spirituality that results in an "us against the world" mentality that fails to recognize the spiritual experience of those in other spiritual traditions
- Good example of Type 2 Spirituality is John Wesley – the founder of the Methodist Church and what has been called the Holiness tradition
    - As a university student at Oxford, he and his brother (Charles) started a club dubbed as the Holy Club – later to be called the Methodists for their emphasis on the methods of bible study and other spiritual disciplines

    - Emphasized the spiritual journey as growth in love of God
    - Not known as a systematic theologian, but rather as one who inspired others in their love of God and commitment to a life of holiness

Type 4 (Social Justice Spirituality) – Danger is Moralism

- Mystical experience is here coupled with an intellectual mode of gathering data
- Result is an active visionary who is single-minded with a deeply focused, almost crusading, type of spirituality 7
- People of this type often minimize importance (or value) of denominational affiliation (or even affiliation with organized religion)
- Goal is simply to obey God and in so doing, transform society by contributing to the establishment of God's Kingdom
- These people equate prayer and theology with action
- They have strong vision and ideals, but are not content to live with ideas – ideas always translate into action
- Spiritual danger lies in a moralistic and unrelenting tunnel-vision that excludes or judges others who do not share their passion
- Good example is St. Francis of Assisi
    - 12th century Italian who left his former life of privilege and went about the countryside caring for the poor and sick
    - Soon was followed so many others that even the Pope took notice and named them an order
    - Had a profound effect on not only the spirituality, but on disease and poverty, throughout Europe

Note: Strictly for educational purposes only.